

**From:** Williams, Lance  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 11/20/01 5:54pm  
**Subject:** comments on antitrust settlement

This note is in response to your request for public comment on the proposed Microsoft antitrust settlement.

To begin, I am a real person, not a fiction, and my comments reflect my own opinions. You will doubtless receive a great deal of paid commentary from shills for Microsoft, or even comments lauding the proposed settlement from nonexistent people. Microsoft has been so flagrant in their fraudulent manipulation of public commentary that this behavior is evident even to the public. Countless "letters to the editor" in countless publications attest to this sort of corporate disinformation. Out-and-out fraud is accompanied by disingenuous commentary from Microsoft satraps and fellow-travellers. These are all symptoms of the excessive power and wealth Microsoft has accumulated, and the abusive means to which this power and wealth are employed.

A computer operating system has an easily delimited function. It organizes the use of the computer's hardware -- its memory, processors, and peripheral devices -- for the user's applications. Applications programs, whether for email, text editing, or entertainment media, are in a clearly separate category. They reflect what the user of the computer wants the computer to accomplish; the operating system provides the means. Microsoft has tried to confuse this distinction with the goal of controlling the market for all computer programs, a goal quite contrary to consumer interests throughout the world. Many valuable applications can be made "features" of the operating system, removing a competitive marketplace for improved products. The features and structure of Microsoft's operating system, which is under their sole control, provide a powerful instrument of monopoly.

The only effective remedy for Microsoft's abuse of their monopoly power is to keep them out of the applications software business. If you vend an operating system, you cannot sell applications: otherwise, you've always got the inside track. There will never be a level playing field without this principle.

The remedies proposed have no more chance of inhibiting Microsoft's criminal behavior than those undertaken in 1995. I implore our Department of Justice to take the greatest pains to avoid the widespread public impression that Microsoft is now sufficiently wealthy and powerful to be above the law.

I admit to my regret that I now share this impression, and believe it to be accurate.

Respectfully yours,

Lance Williams  
Walt Disney Feature Animation

(818) 526-3422